

Remarks/Arguments:

On page 2, the Official Action rejects claims 1, 3-4, 8-11 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as being indefinite. Applicants have amended claim 1 to clarify that the status of input or source plug is inquired by signaling a command. Applicants have amended claim 3 to delete the language rejected by the Examiner. Applicants have also amended claims 8 and 9 to maintain sufficient antecedent basis. Withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

On page 4, the Official Action rejects claims 1-3, 8-9 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) as being anticipated by Applicants' Admitted Prior Art (AAPA). On page 7, the Official Action rejects claims 1-4 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by AV/C Digital Interface Command Specification ("AV/C"). On page 10, the Official Action rejects claims 1-4, 8-9 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by European Patent Publication Number (0 658 010) ("Sony 010"). It is respectfully submitted, however, that the claims are patentable over the art of record for at least the reasons set forth below.

Claims 1, 3, 4, 8 and 9 have been amended. Claims 2 and 16 have been cancelled. Claim 23 has been added. No new matter has been added.

Applicants' invention, as recited by claim 1, includes features which are neither disclosed nor suggested by the art of record, namely:

wherein the response includes information indicating that a virtual signal output is virtually input to the first unit while the first unit actually receives a signal from the bus, and the information further indicates that the virtual signal output is virtually received from a second unit connected to the bus.

Claim 1 relates to the indication of a virtual signal output. Specifically, when the unit responds to the signal command inquiring the status of the input plug, the unit responds indicating that a virtual signal output is input to the first unit. The response indicates that a virtual signal output is input to the first unit while in actuality the first unit receives a signal from the bus. This feature is at least supported on pages 17-20 of the specification and furthermore in Fig. 4. No new matter has been added.

On page 39, AV/C teaches a connect status command. Thus, the Examiner is interpreting that the AV/C connect status response to the connect status command is the same as receiving a single result of the detection. The Examiner believes that the connect status command and connect status response in the AV/C specification is utilized in both AAPA and Sony 010. Neither AAPA, AV/C or Sony 010, however, suggests a virtual signal output.

Applicants' claim 1 is different than the art of record because of a virtual signal output ("wherein the response includes information indicating that a virtual signal output is virtually input to the first unit while the first unit actually receives a signal from the bus, and the information further indicates that the virtual signal output is virtually received from a second unit connected to the bus"). The signaling and response will be described in reference to Applicants' Fig. 4. Specifically, in Applicants' Fig. 4 the first unit (TV 200) is signaled by the controller to inquire about the status of the input plug 201. In response to the signal, the first unit replies that the input plug 201 is virtually receiving data over bus 300 from output plug 102 of VHS 100 (please see virtual path 280). In actuality, however, the digital input plug 201 of TV 200 is obtaining the data over the bus 300 from digital output plug 401 of set top box 400 (the virtual indication is that the source is coming from VHS 100 when in actuality the source is coming from set top box 400). This feature is at least supported on page 18 of the specification ("monitor 210 replies the destination plug 211 is obtaining input from the digital input plug 201 of the TV 200 ... by the response to a command for inquiring the signal source to a digital output plug ... TV 200 replies the digital input plug 201 is receiving input of isochronous data ... from the digital output plug 102 of DVHS 100. Actually, however, the digital input plug 201 of the TV 200 is obtaining isochronous data ... from the digital output plug 401 of set top box 400. That is that the TV 200 detects virtual output and recognizes that the signal is issued from the digital output plug 102 of DVHS 100"). Thus, the TV responds that the virtual signal is output by VHS 100 when in actuality it is output by set top box 400 over bus 300 (it indicates the virtual output not the actual output). This is different from the art of record, because the art of record in responding to the connect status command would reply with the actual output (the prior art does not teach virtual signal output).

Neither AAPA, AV/C, Sony 010, nor their combination suggest the features in Applicants' claim 1. Thus, claim 1 is patentable over the art of record.

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Claims 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 23 include all the features of claim 1 from which they depend. Thus, these claims are also patentable over the art of record for at least the reasons set forth above.

On pages 13, 15, 16 and 17 claims 10 and 11 are rejected under various combinations of Sony010, Sony 029 and Iwamura (U.S. 5,883,621). Neither Sony 029, Iwamura nor their combination make up for the deficiencies of AAPA, AV/C and Sony 010. Thus, these references are also deficient in suggesting the features in Applicants' claim 1.

In view of the amendments and arguments set forth above, the above-identified application is in condition for allowance, which action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



Jacques A. Etkowicz, Reg. No. 41,738
Attorney for Applicants

RAE/sh/nm

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P.O. Box 980
Valley Forge, PA 19482
(610) 407-0700

SH471437